Project Preparation

The principal method for entering research data into the MIRECC IRIS database is through scanable forms created with Cardiff's Tele*form* system. There are a few simple steps you must complete to initiate the Tele*form* process for your study:

1. Review the available assessment instruments under the "Tele*forms*" link at the top of the Assessment Core home page. Available instruments currently are grouped into nine categories: Demographics+, Psychiatric Status, Functioning, Substance Abuse, Neuropsych, Medication Adherence, Side Effects, Role-Play, and "Miscellaneous." Other instruments and categories will be added as needed, so check the Tele*forms* link occasionally to keep up-to-date.

2. Carefully review the document describing the use of Encounter Forms under the "Encounter Form" link in the "Tele*forms*" sidebar. Encounter Forms are our current method for associating a particular encounter number with the assessment(s) specified in the research protocol.

3. Select the available assessment instruments you are interested in using and convey this information, along with your study's IRB/RPN number, to John Junginger (john.junginger@med.va.gov). He will arrange for the PI or Project Manager to enter a minimum data set into the IRIS Protocol Manager to prepare the database for entry of your data. After this is done, and after getting the "Go ahead!" from John, simply print out the Encounter Form and the Tele*forms* of your assessment instruments and supply copies of these to your research personnel. (A brief document on working with Tele*forms* is available here.)
Important Note: IRIS has been programmed to process data as they are defined on Tele*forms*. Activated Tele*forms* ***cannot*** be modified!

4. It is ***strongly*** encouraged that researchers planning to enter data into the MIRECC IRIS database use assessment instruments provided and supported by the MIRECC Assessment Core. If data from unsupported assessment instruments are to be entered into IRIS, the following information must be supplied:

   - A paper copy of the instrument (an e-file is better).
   - A name for the instrument (e.g., Brief Psychiatric Rating Scale or "BPRS").
   - Recent reference(s) of article(s) describing the development, psychometric properties, and use of the instrument.
   - A brief paragraph on the instrument noting the number of items, types of data (e.g., nominal, ordinal, interval), names of scales and subscales, and range of scores.
   - An e-file data dictionary in Excel format specifying data fields and parameters. Data dictionaries of unsupported assessment instruments must be forwarded to John Junginger for review.

   Following receipt and review of this information, the Tele*form* Development Team will create new Tele*forms*, and project preparation will proceed as described above.